

MAE News

Newsletter from the Office of Monitoring, Audit and Enforcement Maine Workers' Compensation Board

Winter 2014

Volume 9, Number 4



Paul H. Sighinolfi
Executive Director/Chair

Office of Monitoring,
Audit and Enforcement
Maine Workers'
Compensation Board
27 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Contacts:

Kimberlee Barriere
Deputy Director
(207) 287-7031

E-mail
Kimberlee.Barriere@Maine.Gov

Anne Poulin
Secretary Associate
(207) 287-7067

E-mail
Anne.Poulin@Maine.Gov

Website:
www.maine.gov/wcb/

Compliance Training for Employers/Insurers

The next open training session will be held April 24 and 25, 2014 at the Maine Department of Labor, at 45 Commerce Drive in Augusta. This session will include two new added features. Kimberlee Barriere will be doing a short presentation on the Board's medical fee schedule. In addition, Brad Howard will be speaking on the Board's move toward a more automated claims handling model via Electronic Data Interchange (EDI). Please contact Anne Poulin to reserve a spot.

The Board continues to be busy doing on-site training for insurers, self-insurers, 3rd-party administrators as well as employers. If you would like information about on-site training for your organization, please contact Gordon Davis at 207-287-6327, or by email at Gordon.Davis@Maine.Gov.

Maximum Benefit Levels

It is only DATES OF INJURY ON OR AFTER 1/1/13 that have a max benefit of 100% of the SAWW. Injuries prior to 1/1/13 continue to be paid at 90% of SAWW. Thus, when the SAWW changes on 7/1/14, max benefit will continue to be 90% of the new SAWW if date of injury is 12/31/12 or earlier, and 100% if date of injury is 1/1/13 or later.

Also remember that when fringes are included in the AWW/WCR calculation, max benefit is 2/3 of SAWW AT THE DATE OF INJURY; that max is NOT adjusted on July 1. You must calculate benefits with and without fringes, applying the respective max rates, and pay the greater.

Maximum Benefit Levels

Effective Date	S.A.W.W.	Maximum Benefit
July 1, 2013	\$728.63	Injuries on/after 1/1/13 <u>\$728.63 (100% SAWW)</u> Injuries prior to 1/1/13 \$655.77 (90% SAWW)
July 1, 2012	\$717.09	Injuries on/after 1/1/13 <u>\$717.09 (100% SAWW)</u> Injuries prior to 1/1/13 \$645.38 (90% SAWW)
July 1, 2011	\$704.59	\$634.13
July 1, 2010	\$691.33	\$622.20
July 1, 2009	\$685.27	\$616.74

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Gordon Davis at 207-287-6327, or by email at Gordon.Davis@Maine.Gov.

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From the Office of Medical/Rehabilitation Services: ICD-10

The Office of Medical/Rehabilitation Services receives several inquiries each week from workers' compensation providers and payors regarding the implementation of ICD-10 effective October 1, 2014.

In accordance with Section 209-A of the Workers' Compensation Act, the medical fee schedule must be consistent with the most current medical coding and billing systems, including the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems report issued by the World Health Organization (ICD).

Due to the implementation of ICD-10, the Board is planning to complete the annual update required by statute in phases – the first phase will be updating the Board's inpatient facility fee schedule for dates of discharge on or after October 1, 2014 to coincide with the implementation of ICD-10. As reimbursement rates for physician and outpatient facility services are not affected by diagnosis, it is likely that providers will have the option of submitting ICD-9 or ICD-10 diagnosis codes for these services until the remainder of the annual update is complete for dates of service on or after January 1, 2015.

Visit the CMS [ICD-10 website](http://www.cms.gov) for the latest news and resources related to the October 1, 2014 implementation.

Certificate Authorizing Release of Benefit Information

The Board was recently advised that the Social Security Administration was not accepting Board Form WCB-6 Certificate Authorizing Release of Benefit Administration as it did not contain the claimant's date of birth. Accordingly this form has been revised to include this information. The new form is available on the Board's website for use.

2014 Annual Report on the Status of the State of Maine Workers' Compensation System

This report was recently submitted to the 126th Maine Legislature. The report is submitted by the three State agencies most involved in the workers' compensation system – the Workers' Compensation Board, the Bureau of Insurance, and the Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Standards and profiles the current status of the workers' compensation system.

Highlights from the Board include the newly recreated Appellate Division, giving both employees and businesses an automatic right of appeal; the Medical Fee Schedule which continues to stabilize workers' compensation medical costs; and a dramatic increase in the number of requests for vocational rehabilitation meaning more injured workers will be returning to gainful employment.

The foregoing factors are evidence of the Maine workers' compensation system's continued improvement for both injured employees and the business community. The report is available at: www.maine.gov/wcb/departments/triagencypublications.htm